

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 116545
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HA:PDERIAN
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S:MS:CKAMMAN
CA:JARIAS
HA:JCARLIN
INS:JREBSAMEN

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 116545

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, CVIS, SREF, CSCE, UR, US

SUBJECT: EMIGRATION OF SOVIET PENTECOSTALS

REFS: (A) MOSCOW 04859 (B) MOSCOW 02731 (C) MOSCOW 02725
(D) MOSCOW 15385 (E) MOSCOW 02185 (F) MOSCOW 0932 (G)
MOSCOW 1353

1. DEPARTMENT BELIEVES THE TIME HAS COME FOR FURTHER USG
SUPPORT TO SOVIET PENTECOSTALS AND OTHER RELIGIOUS BELIEVERS
WHO WE ARE AWARE ARE ACTIVELY SEEKING EMIGRATION TO THE US
BECAUSE OF SOVIET RESTRAINT UPON THE EXERCISE OF THEIR
RELIGIOUS BELIEFS AND PRACTICES. UNTIL NOW, OUR EFFORTS IN
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THEIR BEHALF HAVE BEEN TO SUPPORT PRIVATE EFFORTS, CHANNEL-
LED LARGELY THROUGH THE TOLSTOY FOUNDATION. RESULTS HAVE
BEEN GENERALLY DISAPPOINTING; OVIRS HAVE REFUSED TO PROCESS
VYZOVS, SOME VYZOVS, FROM "BROTHERS-IN-CHRIST" HAVE BEEN
SUMMARILY REFUSED, VYZOVS SENT TO BELIEVERS HAVE GONE
ASTRAY, EXIT PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED AND THEN REVOKED,
BELIEVERS HAVE BEEN PREVENTED FROM PURSUING US VISA APPLI-

CATIONS AT THE EMBASSY, ETC. THESE EFFORTS OVER THE LAST YEAR HAVE ENGAGED A NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANIZATIONS HERE WHICH NOW BELIEVE PRIVATE EFFORTS HAVE REACHED THEIR LIMIT OF EFFECTIVENESS. THE TOLSTOY FOUNDATION HAS FORMALLY ASKED FOR OFFICIAL USG INTERCESSION WITH THE SOVIET AUTHORITIES. AS THE EMBASSY IS AWARE, INDIVIDUAL SOVIET BELIEVERS HAD EARLIER PETITIONED THE PRESIDENT (MOSCOW 02731) FOR HIS HELP.

2. DEPARTMENT IS CONVINCED THAT SUFFICIENT SUPPORT EXISTS AMONG PENTECOSTALS AND VOLAGS IN THE UNITED STATES TO ACCOMMODATE PENTECOSTAL BELIEVERS WHO ARE ABLE TO LEAVE THE SOVIET UNION. WHILE DEPARTMENT DOES NOT CONTEMPLATE MASSIVE NUMBERS OF SOVIET PENTECOSTALS LEAVING THE SOVIET UNION, DEPARTMENT IS PREPARED, IN COOPERATION WITH VOLAGS, TO EXPEDITE PROCESSING OF APPLICATIONS FOR DOCUMENTATION AND TO MOVE THEM AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE TO THE UNITED STATES.

3. REQUEST EMBASSY APPROACH MFA TO EXPRESS US INTEREST IN ASSISTING SOVIET PENTECOSTALS. THE FOLLOWING POINTS COULD BE MADE:

A. SIZEABLE NUMBERS OF SOVIET PENTECOSTALS AND OTHER RELIGIOUS BELIEVERS HAVE MADE KNOWN TO US THEIR INTEREST IN RESETTLING IN THE UNITED STATES.

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B. THESE CHRISTIANS HAVE CO-RELIGIONISTS IN THE UNITED STATES WHO HAVE, THROUGH OFFICIAL INVITATIONS, WELCOMED THEM INTO THEIR COMMUNITIES.

C. WE UNDERSTAND SOVIET LOCAL AUTHORITIES HAVE SHOWN RELUCTANCE TO PROCESS EXIT PERMISSION REQUESTS, AND IN SOME CASES HAVE REPORTEDLY REVOKED EXIT PERMISSION ALREADY GRANTED TO THESE RELIGIOUS BELIEVERS.

D. THE EMBASSY IS PREPARED TO ASSIST ANY SOVIET RELIGIOUS BELIEVER WHO WISHES TO APPLY TO RESETTLE IN THE UNITED STATES. THE EMBASSY REQUESTS THAT THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT PERMIT THESE POTENTIAL APPLICANTS FREELY TO ENTER THE EMBASSY ON THIS LEGITIMATE BUSINESS.

E. THE EMBASSY, ON INSTRUCTIONS, RAISES THE CASES OF THE PENTECOSTALS BECAUSE OF WIDESPREAD CONCERN FOR THEM AMONG RELIGIOUS PERSONS IN THE UNITED STATES AND ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS. VANCE

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